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ABSTRACT

Extracts from the papers and position statements presented at the National Conference on Achievement Testing and Basic Skills are provided in an attempt to capture both the diversity and the consensus among the participants. Six sessions are summarized: (1) achievement tests and basic skills: the issues and the setting--by Harold Howe II; (2) achievement testing: an overview of the issues--with speakers Lauren B. Resnick, Vito Perrone, William W. Turnbull, Bernard C. Watson, Maria Ramirez, and Diane S. Ravitch; (3) achievement testing: the interests--with comments by Richard Celeste, Albert Shanker, John Ryor, Ann Kahn, John W. Porter, Frederick H. Schultz, and Ramon C. Cortines; (4) basic skills and testing: the congressional perspective--with Claiborne Pell, S. I. Hayakawa, and Michael Harrington; (5) achievement testing and basic skills: the federal response--with speakers Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Patricia Albjerg Graham, John Brademas, and Mary F. Berry; and (6) sense of the conference: conclusions and recommendations--by Martin Kaplan. (GDC)

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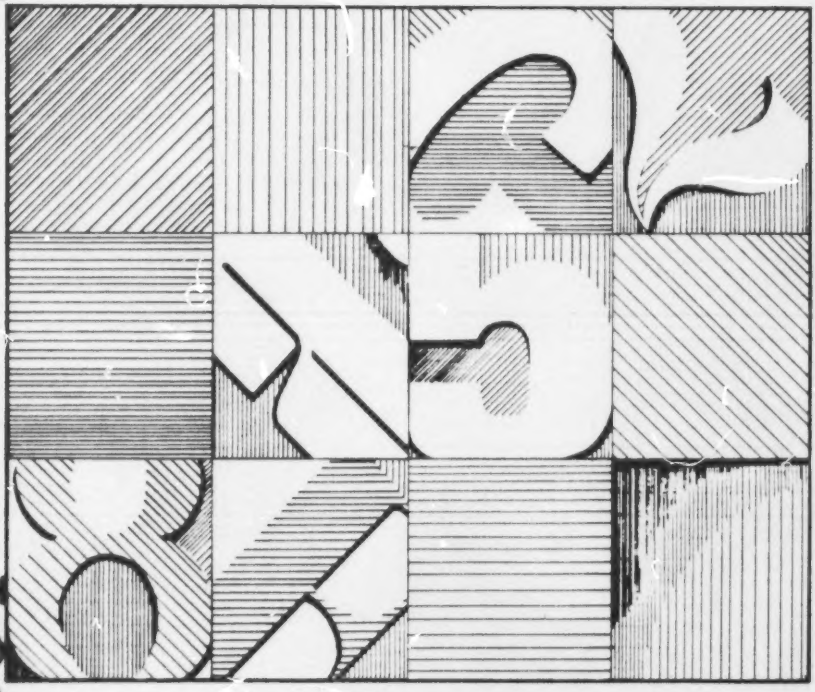
ACHIEVEMENT TESTING AND BASIC SKILLS

Conference Proceedings



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The National Institute of Education
U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20208

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACHIEVEMENT TESTING AND BASIC SKILLS

March 1–3, 1978

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Secretary
Mary F. Berry, Assistant Secretary for Education

National Institute of Education
Patricia Albjerg Graham, Director

February 1979

"The spirited discussion of the times can help improve tests themselves by highlighting areas where further research is necessary, and can improve the use of tests by shaping our understanding of the appropriate and effective employment of achievement testing in the instructional process."

— *Jimmy Carter*
(from the President's message to the National Conference on Achievement Testing and Basic Skills
Washington, D.C., March 2, 1978).

FOREWORD

Defending the intrinsic worth of education is becoming a key challenge for our educational institutions. Our educational system is being called into question—not simply because there are fewer students to serve, but because the value of education is less clear than it once was.

To understand why the value of education is being questioned, we must look to our past. American society has tended to view our schools as a cure for every social and economic problem. When these problems have persisted, we have blamed the schools, not society.

We must recognize that the primary reason we educate people is not for salvation, morality, mobility, or even for economic gain. It is to make persons literate—able to read, write, manipulate symbols, and develop independent means of making judgments and determining actions. Until we are willing to argue that literacy, in its broadest sense, is adequate justification for the educational system, we will continue to charge that system with undertakings in which it cannot, by itself, succeed. And more importantly, we will continue to misunderstand the central purpose of education.

I am not taking the position that we should concentrate all our educational efforts on increasing literacy. We must also continue to work toward improved equity in education—toward reducing obstacles to academic achievement that result simply from a student's being nonwhite, female, or poor.

I believe these related concerns, fostering literacy and increasing equity, are the most important challenges for education today. Public policy toward education at the local, state, and Federal levels must come to view the ability to read, write, and think—to establish an independence based on knowledge of the world and self—as the preeminent reason for education and as a necessary condition of equity.

Patricia Albjerg Graham, Director
National Institute of Education

PREFACE

When HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano, Jr., convened the National Conference on Achievement Tests and Basic Skills in March 1978, he focused the attention of professional educators and the lay public on an issue of national importance. Public concern about student achievement in the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic has grown for more than a decade. During this period, scores on standardized achievement tests administered to college-bound students, as well as measures of student achievement in the basic skills, steadily declined. A number of individual researchers have offered competing analyses of the reasons for this decline. The College Entrance Examination Board, the National Academy of Education, and the National Academy of Sciences have each convened panels of experts in an effort not only to understand the nature of the test score decline, but also to examine how tests are used or misused and whether they accurately and adequately measure a student's educational progress.

To help develop a common understanding of the many dimensions of the testing issue and to provide a forum to discuss the Federal role in assisting state and local agencies, the March conference brought together teachers and educational administrators; experts on testing; government officials from the Federal, state, and local levels; parents; and community representatives. Harold Howe II, struck a tone of conciliation and shared purpose for the diverse group with his opening words, "This conference was called to talk about how the Federal Government's concern for schooling, centered both in the Congress and the HEW, can be joined to all the interests represented here to devise more useful ways of determining what is being achieved in schools."

Having identified the differing perspectives and opposing viewpoints among the participants, Howe appealed for a truce in the "four-cornered shouting match" on behalf of the indisputable need to improve the quality of education in America. The appeal carried, and the antagonism predicted for such a gathering was conspicuously muted. As testimony to the conferees' unity of purpose, small group discussions and corridor conversations found the conflicting interests coalescing in search of shared positions and practical solutions.

In this report of the National Conference on Achievement Testing and Basic Skills, we have endeavored to capture the sense of both the diversity and the consensus among the participants. Rather than providing a verbatim reproduction of the various papers and position statements, we have attempted to catch the underlying message of the proceedings by reporting salient extracts from the various presentations and summaries consistent with the speakers' points of view.

Most speakers agreed that, on the whole, the schools have done a creditable job of educating the American student. These same speakers also observed that the schools still must find ways to meet the special needs of groups that traditionally have attained lower levels of educational achievement. Most concurred, as well, that testing is an important tool in the evaluation of schooling, but that a better understanding of both the potential and the limits of tests is needed not only by the educators who use the tests, but also by the students who take them and the public who reads their results.

The recommendations developed during the conference emerged from the series of small group discussions that followed each plenary session. The recommendations touch on nearly every aspect of the educational system. In their completeness, they reflect a consensus of the participants about an important imperative that should be part of any activity in education: Remember the whole picture; remember the whole student.

The conference participants, both during the time of the meetings and in correspondence following them, made unusually significant and helpful contributions to the conference. The following proceedings reflect their sensitivity, sensibility, and judgment. We at NIE were pleased to organize this conference and, especially, to attract to it persons of such perception and commitment. We are in their debt.

Tommy M. Tomlinson
Maureen E. Treacy
National Institute of Education

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I. ACHIEVEMENT TESTS AND BASIC SKILLS: The Issues and the Setting

"Compared with the rest of the world, schools in the United States are doing a good job," said keynote speaker Harold Howe II, Ford Foundation vice president for education and research. "I do not know a country with a population as diverse as ours and so tumultuous an educational history that is doing as well as we are."

In setting forth the issues for the conferees, Howe acknowledged that American schools still have the task of meeting special needs of the handicapped, migrant children, the Spanish-speaking, blacks, American Indians, and students from other underachieving groups. But he commended "the very great achievement of American schools in bringing into the classrooms almost all the children of almost all the people.

"Our capacity to move on the two fronts of educational equity and excellence at the same time" he attributed to the diversity of institutions in the educational system and to the "freedom within a local school system to vary instruction and materials to fit its pupils." The essential means to improve quality in public schools is "helping teachers and principals to do a better job. . . . Changes in tests, textbooks, or promotion requirements are secondary lines of action that will not make much difference without the interest and support of teachers."

The Federal role even as a catalyst for change in the schools was resisted until the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, he said. This act recognized the diversity of both public and private schools and allowed schools to receive Federal funds without imposing uniformity. In contrast, he argued, "I find in present legislative proposals before Congress for national achievement testing an intent that opens the door to a nationalized school system." He criticized this concept as "anathema" and as a threat to "the diversity on which depends the balance between equity and excellence."

Howe noted that most states are active in some phase of achievement testing: Nineteen have adopted basic competency testing programs, sixteen are planning them, and eleven others are studying the matter. These programs involve two types of testing, Howe explained. One type will give "a composite picture at the state and local levels of the language and mathematics skills of students at varying ages in order to evaluate programs or to identify the need for remediation. . . . The other is designed to apply to a particular point in the educational progress of young people, either to qualify them for a diploma or promotion or to keep them where they are until they demonstrate more advanced skills."

He cautioned educators about possible effects of minimal competency testing: "The schools must become more willing than they are now to hold youngsters in grade and work flexibly and imaginatively to solve their learning problems, allowing them to progress through school at differing rates and with increased costs of school completion for a significant number of students. Or we must develop some alternative form of institution unlike the present school and more like the Job Corps for those the schools are unable to serve. Or we must all live with the consequences of a group of young people rejected by our educational system and our economic system and embittered by their rejection in the name of improving educational standards."

He also raised several issues to be considered in the use of two common types of tests.

Norm-referenced tests, "which allow one to compare individual children and groups of children with each other on a common yardstick of achievement . . . take the temperature of the patient but give few hints about the disease or its diagnosis," he said. "One must know more than the test score to draw any meaning from the comparison it provides."

However, he added, as gate-keepers to determine whether a student should be promoted, their "convenience is vastly greater than (their) accuracy or fairness." Such tests are a legitimate part of promotion and admission decisions, he said, but they do not take into account other attributes of students, such as motivation and maturity, which also should be considered in decisions about students. He criticized schools and colleges for falling back on "the appealing neatness of a test score." Most agencies making and selling tests try to encourage their proper use, he said, but "unfortunately they don't succeed." He warned: "If parents really knew how inexact these beguiling numbers really are, they would be up in arms about their frequent misuse."

Criterion-referenced tests, he explained, allow one to determine whether individual children or groups of children have learned some particular knowledge or skill that is important to the school and measured by the test. But "one problem in their use is the difficulty of achieving agreement upon what students should be required to know or do."

He said it is important to continue improving criterion-referenced tests. "If we are to do a better job teaching basic skills to children, we need to improve the capacities of teachers to tune their teaching methods and materials to the needs of the individual child. To do this, we need very different instruments from the usual standardized achievement test; we need instruments that are carefully made, not hastily concocted from existing tests."

The effect on minorities of several aspects of testing should be carefully examined, according to Howe. "I have to raise the difficult question of

whether the national mood for improving basic skills performance has hidden within it overtones of racism. There is no simple answer," he said. He agreed with those who have argued that "we do black children a disservice not to hold them to the same expectations we do white children. At the same time, we know that inequalities in the lives of children outside the school are reflected in school performance, and the black, Hispanic, and native American children are peculiarly subject to handicaps from both poverty and discrimination.

"Basic competency testing will certainly result in more educational delays and denials for minorities than for the rest of us. The only resolution of this difficulty I can accept is a clear commitment by those who advocate it to provide at the same time all the special additional services that may be needed to help less fortunate children meet the test requirements."

He suggested several possible Federal initiatives, including research on "the soft factors in judging students . . . those nonquantifiable aspects of human beings that must be considered in decisions about them."

Finally, he reminded the audience that tests are only part of the educational picture: "No amount of giving tests to children will ever teach children to read and write better."

II. ACHIEVEMENT TESTING: An Overview of the Issues

"We have to consider where today's tests are failing and whether the functions of schools in which tests play a part can be better met, either with better tests, more informed use of existing tests, or different mechanisms altogether." With this charge, Lauren B. Resnick, codirector of the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh, introduced a panel of speakers with diverse concerns about the uses of tests.

Resnick noted that standardized tests originally were adopted by school systems to increase the variety of school programs, to extend opportunities to students formerly denied them, and to assure acceptable standards of curriculum content. Now they are used for different purposes: to group students in a class or school before instruction begins, to "see how well we have succeeded in the instructional effort" at the end of schooling, and to monitor instruction on a daily or weekly basis.

These constructive purposes can have invidious consequences, however. Resnick explained that many have come to consider tests at least partly responsible for limiting the quality of instruction when school districts shape curriculum to match tests, for fostering inequality by creating rigid tracks that restrict learning possibilities, and for reinforcing through cultural biases the advantages conferred by birth and privilege.

Considerations in the Use of Test Results

Serious doubts that current testing practices are either very educational or informative were expressed by Vito Perrone, president of the National Consortium on Testing, a group that includes the Educational Testing Service, National Education Association, and other organizations and individuals concerned about testing.

Perrone reaffirmed the consortium's "vigorous support" of evaluation and quality education and strongly advocated a reappraisal of standards for both evaluating and using tests. "What we can measure competently with achievement tests, whether norm- or criterion-referenced, represents a very small subset of the goals of American education."

He suggested that the major weakness in proposals for accountability systems based on testing is that they generally ignore the people who teach and learn—those individuals whose standards are supposed to be upgraded. Further, "There is considerable ambiguity about the connection between achievement testing and basic skills," he said, arguing that success on achievement tests and knowledge of basic skills do not necessarily relate to one another.

"To suggest that more testing is a means for improving children's learning of basic skills is, at best, dubious. Connecting achievement testing and basic skills may well be good politics, but in the end, might make it difficult to bring the most productive focus to our deliberations."

He concluded, "In spite of what is claimed for testing today, much of it just hasn't been particularly useful to teachers, children, and parents—and this ought to be the bottom line."

A Test Publisher's Perspective

Accuracy, objectivity, and comparability were the three main virtues of standardized tests that led teachers—and later administrators and admissions officers—to adopt them widely when they were introduced, according to William W. Turnbull, president of the Educational Testing Service. "Teachers knew what an inexact business grading really is, and they welcomed the new development that held the promise of improving their information: The tests were consistently more accurate and more objective, and they showed how well the student did in comparison with pupils in the same or other classes or states.

"We had then the basis for a fine combination of techniques: standardized tests, which could measure sheer accomplishment in several areas very well, and teacher judgment, which could add dimensions inaccessible to standardized testing. . . . But we have since learned how difficult it is to keep achievement scores in that perspective—as one ingredient in a mix of information.

"Testing has undoubtedly suffered more from the excessive expectations of its most devoted advocates than from the attacks of its critics," he observed. He summarized three fallacies—"born of overenthusiasm"—that have led to misuse of tests. The "micrometer fallacy" attributes to test scores a precision—"an infallibility"—that they have never possessed. The "whole person fallacy" tends to cause much more to be read into achievement test scores than the amount a student has learned in a given subject. The "equal preparation fallacy" leads to beliefs that the test compensates for the differences in academic development of children whose learning opportunities have differed dramatically.

When these fallacies are resisted, he noted, tests do "a rather good job of measuring the academic accomplishments they purport to measure." However, they cannot measure the whole person nor compensate for differences in background. But "standardized test scores have given a new dimension of information to educators, primarily through comparability across geographic areas and across spans of time."

Turnbull identified three legitimate uses of standardized tests: "their use by teachers to determine how much the individual student has learned, by administrators to determine how much classes and larger groups have learned, and by university admissions people to discover how well prepared a prospective student may be.

"I suggest we put tests in a reasonable perspective and join forces to improve both the tests and their use," he concluded.

Implications of Tests for Children from Poor and Minority Families

It is the misuse of tests, not testing itself, that can be disadvantageous to students from poor and minority families, according to Bernard C. Watson, vice president for academic administration at Temple University. Watson made it clear he did not advocate abandonment of tests, but he expressed concern that tests not be expected to do things they simply cannot do. Misuse of tests "takes on special significance" for poor and minority children because, as groups, these children generally do less well on tests, he said.

"Tests can be helpful tools . . . but we know that any test or battery of tests measures a fairly narrow band of qualities, abilities, or other characteristics of individuals." But he estimated that "tens of thousands" of counselors, teachers, admissions officers, employers, and others think test scores really describe and summarize the essential and inherent complexity of the individual in question. Too many decision makers are poorly equipped to understand the limitations of test scores in evaluating human potential.

Part of the responsibility for this lack of understanding, he said, "must be placed squarely on the shoulders of test makers and the purveyors of tests." They have introduced caveats about what their products are designed to do and what they can and cannot do, he acknowledged; the information is there for the intelligent and interested to use. But it is neither highlighted nor read and understood by people who use test scores to make decisions that may dramatically affect an individual's life.

Watson also was critical of test makers for creating an impression that "a test can be developed to measure almost anything." He acknowledged efforts by professionals in the field to provide guidance for the users of tests, including the 1974 publication of *Standards for the Use of Psychological Tests* by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education. "But how many counselors, teachers, or administrators have read or understood this document?" he asked.

Misuse can be blamed in part on a belief in the magic of numbers by a technologically advanced society, he suggested. "We believe that if we can take human qualities or characteristics, reduce them to quantitative terms, analyze them with sophisticated techniques, and come out with a correlation

for a series of them . . . we've got it!. . . That's what we do with numbers like IQ scores, achievement test scores, grade point averages, and other things, but particularly with tests," he said. "It's a convenience, but it certainly does not represent reality."

Minority and poor families are particularly concerned about the use of test scores to legitimize such "labeling" practices as tracking, credentialing, and denying access. "My basic concern is what happens to individuals who become the victims of inappropriate uses of tests. . . . I'm concerned about anyone making decisions about any human being on the basis of something as limited as a single test score or series of test scores."

Finally, concern exists that test scores are not neutral—"they represent judgments about values important in this society," he said. From there, he continued, "it is not too great a leap in logic to suggest that test scores affect how much value interpreters of the scores place on the individual in question . . . in terms of potential growth, achievement, and access to the traditional symbols of success and status in our society."

Cultural Considerations in Achievement and Basic Skills

The effects of testing on children from ethnic and cultural minorities was of particular concern to Maria Ramirez, assistant commissioner for general education and curricular services, New York State Department of Education. There is no such thing as culture-free achievement testing, she said. The very act of achievement testing assumes a cultural value placed on achieving, but in the United States a number of subcultures do not value achievement quite as highly as the majority population. "Some groups are more cooperative than aggressive, more deferential than competitive. Rewards are primarily for the group, not for the individual. Thus, the first cultural bias of achievement testing is the very concept itself," she contended.

The question becomes not how to eliminate cultural bias from achievement tests, but how to be sure that the biases are valid. She had some suggestions:

- The area selected for achievement testing should be an important part of the culture in which a child has functioned or is to function. If the area is one not likely to have been experienced outside the school's curriculum, it should be an actual part of the curriculum. And if the area is part of the curriculum, it must actually be taught in the classroom of the student to be tested.
- Language knowledge and skills knowledge should not be confounded in the preparation and administration of tests. Tests of skills knowledge must be given in a student's first, i.e., most proficient, language while second language skills must be understood and measured for proficiency in the second language alone.

- Translation is not enough. Many monosyllabic English words become polysyllabic words in Spanish, and levels of difficulty may not be equivalent.

Origins of the New Testing Movement

The demand for a new emphasis on basic skills and the imposition of minimum competency requirements for high school graduation are the expression of the discontent that parents and public officials now feel toward the quality of education, said Diane Ravitch, an assistant professor at the Teachers College, Columbia University.

"The public's demand for better education and higher standards of performance should have been initiated by educators," she said. But far from leading the movement, educators have developed various strategies to evade the question or discredit those who raise it. She argued that educators are worried because they perceive that the real object of the movement is not so much to test the competence of the children as it is to test the competence of the schools. She suggested that educators recall some basics of education: "The purpose of education in a democratic society is really quite simple: to improve individuals and by doing so improve society. The purpose of tests is to help measure whether we're attaining our goal of improving the academic achievement of pupils."

Ravitch also summarized the findings of a report, "Improving Educational Achievement," prepared by a panel convened by the National Academy of Education at the request of the U.S. assistant secretary for education. The report concludes that:

- American life today requires mass literacy of a higher order than ever before; a greater number of people have achieved that higher level. However, as expectations of minimum literacy have risen, increasing numbers of people who have not learned to read fall farther and farther behind the standards.

- Standards of excellence have declined. These declines are attributed to a persistent de-emphasis of intellectual rigor in substance and methods.

- The spread of minimum competency testing is attributed to a lack of trust felt by parents and legislators in the judgment of those operating the schools; but minimum competencies might well become accepted maximum competencies, resulting in a further erosion of educational standards.

- The consequences of automatic promotion must be re-examined. Learning problems are likely to go undetected, so large numbers of children move on to high school where their inadequate preparation leads to discipline problems and hampers the regular work of the school.
- Tests should be used to identify children who are not learning, to diagnose their special learning difficulties, and to direct additional resources and individualized attention to them as early and as often as needed.

III. ACHIEVEMENT TESTING: The Interests

While representatives of national teacher and parent organizations stressed the need to improve testing methods, state and local educators recounted their experiences in successfully implementing assessment programs. As Ohio Lt. Gov. Richard Celeste noted in his introductory remarks, these educators brought "a very practical perspective, a contrast of expectations and experiences, and a glimpse at what really happens when we begin to look at achievement at local and state levels."

Teachers and Achievement Testing

The presidents of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) expressed different views on the question of standardized tests. The NEA has called for a moratorium on them; the AFT believes they should be retained, and that the public should be educated as to what the test scores mean—and don't mean. Both presidents called for improvements in testing, and both defended public schooling from much of the criticism they see as implicit in the move toward minimum competency tests.

AFT President Albert Shanker observed that there is no universal "teacher view" on testing, that one would find "the same range of disagreements in a teacher organization as there is within a community or on a school board." But Shanker also stated that it would be unreasonable for a spokesperson for any such organization to recommend that testing be abandoned altogether.

Shanker's position is that the public wants to know how well students and schools are performing. If teachers totally object to testing as a means of measuring performance, parents will wonder what the teachers are trying to hide, and taxpayers may refuse to support educational programs.

However, Shanker underlined the anxieties about standardized testing often expressed by teachers. Tests take time away from teaching and have little effect on actual learning. Test results are frequently misinterpreted by the press and the public. The misinterpreted results may be used as "a form of simplistic accountability" in which teachers' jobs and salaries depend on their students' test scores.

Shanker suggested that the testing controversy is symptomatic of a greater issue: the loss of faith in public education. He attributed this problem to several factors:

- Back when few Americans were well educated, teachers and the educational process were held in high esteem. Now that public education

has succeeded in reaching the general population, teachers are seen as equals. Many people no longer look up to teachers, but rather look down at them.

- Counter-culture criticism denouncing public education has significantly affected public opinion during the last two decades. Yet the counter-culture does not seek to reform the schools, but rather to rebuke the values of society as represented by our educational system.
- The educational establishment has been too defensive. While condoning all the attacks on standardized testing, it has conveyed the impression that it doesn't know how to measure progress or make rational determinations. Then the taxpayers revolt because the schools don't demonstrate their effectiveness.
- School systems have succumbed to the pressures to encourage "innovative" programs while neglecting to support established methods.
- The new "open" policies which require test scores to be released to individuals and the public have not been accompanied by educational policies to explain the meaning of those scores.

To counter these problems, Shanker recommended a reaffirmation of the educational profession. "We have to start with the notion that it is possible to develop a body of knowledge, to develop a model of competent teaching practice over a period of time." He characterized education as an artistic profession with a base that is part science, part experience, and part experiment. Establishing goals of student achievement and preparation for life in a competitive, achievement-oriented society would help to attract similarly inclined teachers to our system, Shanker concluded.

On the testing of teachers, Shanker noted: "I don't think there is any test that will tell us whether a person is going to be a good teacher—that we will find out later—but tests can tell us whether a math teacher knows enough math and an English teacher enough English."

In summary, Shanker recommended the improvement rather than the rejection of standardized tests: "You can't get rid of the unemployment problem by firing the Bureau of Labor Statistics." He suggested a federally sponsored public and professional information program for "truth in testing" to counteract the problems of misinterpretation. Finally, Shanker defended public education: "It's hard to say that we're illiterate and failing as a country while everybody else in the world is working to provide us with goods in exchange for our know-how. If things were as bad as some say they are, we wouldn't be where we are now."

NEA President John Ryor emphasized the confusion and contradictory attitudes held about schooling: "Parents who almost universally reject the notion of a national curriculum . . . at the same time embrace the need for a

national standardized test—without understanding the relationship between the two." Perhaps we should answer a long series of questions before we start devising further means of evaluating, he said. "In my view, standardized evaluations of education in the United States make no more sense than insisting that education in Point Barrow, Alaska, ought to be identical to education in White Plains, New York."

Since 1971, the NEA has sought a moratorium on standardized testing because of beliefs that the tests do not do what they purport to do, that they tend to be culturally biased, that they are norm-referenced, and that they automatically label half the students as losers. Standardized tests seldom correspond significantly to local learning objectives, and they can't be used to measure growth over a short period of time, Ryor argued. Further, many school systems tend to misuse the tests in jumping to unwarranted conclusions about curriculum and to justify tracking students into inflexible decisions regarding education and career. Countering the common accusation that such reasons for teachers' opposition to standardized tests are self-serving, Ryor contended that "maintaining an evaluation model based on nationally normed tests would be the easiest of all possible worlds for teachers, as there's great comfort in anonymity and that's precisely what standardized tests provide."

After three years of study, the NEA Task Force on Testing concluded that tests should be used primarily to improve instruction, to diagnose learning difficulties, and to plan educational activities in response to those learning needs, but not in ways that deny any student full access to educational opportunity.

The essence of education "lies in what happens between children and their parents and teachers and classmates," Ryor observed. "These relationships are delicate and susceptible to strong outside influences. An accountability system must take care not to damage these relationships and, above all else, must be acceptable to those who are expected to abide by it, for in a pluralistic society an accountability system must promote diversity, not conformity."

Ryor reaffirmed NEA's belief in the importance of evaluation and supported such tools as individual diagnostic tests, teacher-made tests, school letter grades, and criterion-referenced tests—but not standardized tests.

"The whole notion of norm-referenced, standardized tests makes a lie out of the often-stated concern for individual differences. . . . The most tragic aspect of such tests is that they contribute to the training of children to do better than somebody else. In my view, the only competition worth the name is competition with oneself," Ryor said.

"A free society needs, above all things, a free and learned citizenry, and the first task of education is to stimulate curiosity, to teach children how to learn and how to remain open. If we can't do that, then we can't truly

educate; we can only train. And the difference between training and educating is monumental. Educated people remain curious for a lifetime, but one who is trained only performs . . . a nation of trained people could not possibly be learned and flexible enough to meet all the complex challenges that lie ahead of us."

A Parent's View of Achievement Testing

Ryor's concerns were echoed by Ann Kahn, Fairfax County, Virginia, school board member and national secretary of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. "I come to you reflecting a deep and growing concern about the use of norm-referenced achievement tests and the virtual con job that I think school systems have done on most parents regarding the meanings of those test scores.

I'm appalled at the dependence of schools and parents on a rather meaningless accumulation of data. I know our dependence on years of norm-referenced achievement tests has simply obscured the information that we need to know; it has delayed the responsibility that we need to assume to be really accountable for the teaching of children."

Kahn went on to point out that the comparative data resulting from norm-referenced tests do nothing to help determine what individual children know and don't know, provide no precise information to schools about whether children are learning what schools are attempting to teach, and suggest no basis upon which parents and school board members can make judgments about the effectiveness of programs or the quality of teaching. Where comparative data are needed, she recommended use of limited standardized achievement testing with valid national sampling techniques. Kahn also recommended using locally formulated criterion-referenced tests, educating principals and teachers to improve use and interpretation of measurement, and, helping responsible school districts find alternative ways of getting information. In addition, she encouraged Federal and state governments to use other than test criteria to determine eligibility for funds for special programs. Finally, she urged, "Go back to the community and unsell the job that has been done over the years by educating the parents about the limitations of norm-referenced testing."

Two State Assessment Programs

State minimal competency programs have worked well in two states, according to panelists John W. Porter, superintendent of public instruction for the State of Michigan, and Frederick H. Schultz, chairman of the Florida Education Council.

"We have a lot of children who for various reasons are not able to be competitive in the American way of life. What the public is asking us is whether or not there is a way within the American public school system to enable

these youngsters to be competitive, at least at a minimal level," Porter said.

Michigan responded to that public concern with a statewide education assessment program, developed over the past ten years. "The basic purpose of the assessment program is to measure educational needs against expected learning. The teachers write the test items and have told us what they think are reasonable objectives for all students in the state," Porter explained.

Minimum performance objectives have been developed in ten distinct areas such as career development, personal growth, and social understanding, as well as in reading and math. As a matter of public policy, the state assumes that, once the needs of youngsters have been identified, those special needs can be met. Proposals for experimental and demonstration programs are required of systems where the test data demonstrate special needs; compensatory funds are made available.

According to Porter, the old system of standardized testing based on a normal distribution curve was good for its time, but was based on four assumptions that should be considered invalid now. "For 200 years it was assumed that the operation of our public schools would be relatively inexpensive; that our public schools would be able to screen, sort out, and select; that those who owned real property and paid for the schools would also be the parents of the children; and that the 'have-nots' would not actively participate. Those assumptions simply are no longer feasible."

Additional advantages of the Michigan program outlined by Porter include the built-in necessity of studying expectations in advance of instruction, a capacity to report to parents the performance of their children on an item-by-item basis, its encouragement of professional staff at the classroom level, its automatic check on the purchase and use of materials, and its potential to focus attention on the specific needs for in-service programs.

Speaking on the Florida program, Schultz highlighted the events leading to passage of Florida's minimum competency requirements—among the first in the Nation to be implemented. The Florida Educational Accountability Act of 1976 mandates the administration of basic skills competency tests in grades three, five, eight, and eleven, and the attainment of a minimum score on a special fundamental literacy test to qualify for a high school diploma.

Of the approximately 100,000 students who took the functional literacy examination for the first time in the fall of 1977, 36 percent failed the computations sections and 8 percent failed in the communications section; 37 percent of the students failed one of the two sections of the examination.

The reaction to the results? "A roaring success," according to Schultz. "If we put the test program on the ballot, I believe it would receive at least 80 percent favorable vote; as far as I know there is no major officeholder who has opposed it. As far as I know, there is not even a major candidate for public office who has opposed it, remarkable as that may seem."

Results of the test, he added, re-emphasized the need for remediation, increased the activity of schools that reported fairly high percentages of failure, and stimulated tremendously the degree of parent involvement in education.

Perspectives from a District Superintendent

Standardized test scores had been declining in Pasadena for about five years, but the trend had gone virtually unnoticed until a 1970 court order to desegregate, according to Ramon C. Cortines, superintendent of the Pasadena, California, Unified School District.

At that time the national news media became highly interested in knowing how the students were doing. After reviewing probable causes for the test scores, the board of education voted unanimously for a resolution stating that the first priority of the school district would be to reverse the decline of SAT scores of all students.

"As I look back, there were some particularly noteworthy points in relation to improving test scores for minority children, for poor children, in fact, for all children," he recalled.

An ongoing evaluation process was implemented for sequential math and reading programs. Consistency in the amount of time spent on reading was emphasized for students scoring below grade level. In-service training was developed to improve teachers' ability to interpret student needs. Interruptions of reading and math instruction were eliminated. Title I programs were incorporated into the core curriculum instead of being treated as a program appendage. Staff members were encouraged to expect all children to learn, and parent involvement was encouraged. Auxiliary services were introduced in health counseling, psychological evaluation, library science, and other areas.

The Pasadena Board of Education now reviews achievement data annually and holds community meetings where principals review the meaning of the data for parents and staff. The district has initiated a Saturday reading and math program using a certified teacher, assisted by a competent aide and selected high school students. A similar program is offered after school in bilingual instruction and English as a second language. In addition, in-service training was instituted to familiarize administrators with the math and reading sequences.

Cortines attributes a large part of the success of the effort to "being honest with the staff and the community and opening a two-way dialogue." He concluded, "I am happy to report that a multiracial, socioeconomically diverse school district can say that its standardized test scores are not on the decline, but improving. In some grades and in some areas they are doing so very markedly. Even in primary grades there are some signs that the achievement gap is being narrowed between majority and minority children."

IV. BASIC SKILLS AND TESTING: The Congressional Perspective

As the public has become more concerned over testing in the schools and over the declining math and reading skills of students, more attention has been paid to these issues in Congress. Senators Claiborne Pell, Rhode Island, and S. I. Hayakawa, California, and Representative Michael Harrington, Massachusetts, offered their views to the conference on legislative aspects of testing and basic skills.

Comments of Senator Claiborne Pell

Senator Pell expressed concern over the "spotty performance" of youngsters in writing and math in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, as well as the continuing decline in SAT scores by prospective college students. He agreed with the findings of the National Academy of Education panel on testing and basic skills that a number of sociological influences have affected the decline. "Obviously the society at large, not just the schools, plays a major role in achievement decline," he said.

Senator Pell discussed a proposal for a Council on Quality Education as a means by which the Federal Government might help states and localities combat the decline. Originally proposed by Adm. Hyman Rickover in testimony before Pell's Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities, the council would be a blue-ribbon group commissioned to develop Federal standards for performance at various grade levels. The proposal also calls for the development of a national achievement test that would measure student performance against a national standard and could be voluntarily adopted by local and state school boards.

Pell told the assembly that, in his judgment, every program of testing that emerges from his subcommittee this year would contain neither provisions for the use of test data as a basis for the distribution of Federal funds nor mandatory requirements for testing or test development. The point of such a program would rest solely on the voluntary development and implementation of methods to assess educational performance.

Sensitive to the resistance parents and educators often express to a Federal presence in the classroom, Pell acknowledged that the undertaking would "have to be carefully meshed with ongoing state efforts." Following these comments, the Senator asked the conferees whether they would favor such a test. In a dramatic affirmation of the anticipated resistance, they were nearly unanimous in their opposition to his proposal.

Pell also suggested that Federal assistance could be given to states and localities to develop their own tests, and encouraged the NIE to work toward that end. A diversity of tests within a state could reduce the possibility that teachers might "teach to the national test," he noted.

"We must not lose sight of an important point," Pell said. "Tests and test results themselves do not improve student performance. . . . All tests do is tell us the extent to which schools have been successful in teaching specific students specific skills. . . . What is important is what teachers and parents do with the test results when they have them."

Comments of Senator S. I. Hayakawa

Senator Hayakawa reported that, "during the last year, Americans spent far more on all levels of education than they spent for defense—for primary and secondary education alone the bill was $75 billion, more than four times the expenditure of 1960." But judging from his mail, he noted, parents seem to feel the more they pay the less they get. Thus parents have turned to the Federal level for help.

The Senator proposed several possible Federal actions:

- Pursue a method to identify and help early in their schooling students who have difficulty with basic skills. He specifically suggested developing a test of competency against clearly defined standards for reading, writing, and mathematics at intervals throughout schooling to insure that the student is acquiring these necessary skills. Such a test "would be made available to those states and localities requesting it to be used as they see fit," he said.
- Encourage setting high rather than low standards to avoid institutionalized incompetency for future graduating classes.
- Encourage teachers to assist in developing competency standards. He said teachers should welcome the opportunity to be held accountable, because the alternative is likely to be a tremendous increase in the number of malpractice suits being filed.
- Share the responsibility for conducting remedial programs to bring students up to specified standards.

Hayakawa also responded to concerns expressed earlier in the conference about cultural bias. "I'm not so sure that cultural bias is all that serious a matter," he said. "All testing inevitably has to have a cultural bias. If you're being tested in China, you're going to be tested in Chinese, whether you like it or not, and so in American culture I think we shouldn't hesitate to have a cultural bias that says 'This is America.' We are one nation, not fifty nations, and we desperately need a nationally calibrated thermometer of educational achievement."

Comments of Congressman Michael Harrington

While expressing strong feelings about the need for improving education, Representative Harrington expressed reservations about reliance on testing as a quick-fix solution. "While I do not partake of the hysteria which in some cases would have us believe that most students now graduating from high schools are functionally illiterate," he said he was "also hard put to be as optimistic as Harold Howe," the conference keynote speaker. "I need only return to the schools in my district, meet with the students themselves, and talk with concerned parents to realize that there are many out there who are being failed by the educational process and that something needs to be done about it."

However, Harrington added, "I also believe that it is a terrible mistake to waste crucial time and resources turning to standardized tests for the answers. The real answers, if they can be found, lie in difficult assessments of social, economic, attitudinal, and educational components that make our schools what they are today. These components include inadequate funding, which President Carter's new proposal for increased Title I money for impact assistance may help to ameliorate. They include, as well, the nature of discrimination in society, employment, and housing, which has cut off both minorities and whites in the lower income brackets from American life as we teach it in the schools. They include the climate in the schools, which are often the grim centerpieces in miles of urban blight—schools where crime, discontent, and alienation often prevent a teacher from focusing on the subject. They include deteriorating relationships between indifferent students and disillusioned or ineffective teachers. These are the real issues and our grappling with them productively is only forestalled, if not completely circumvented, by our preoccupation with test scores," he said.

"The public is presented with score declines and sees them as a confirmation of fears about the quality of education. So, the clamor for more tests to maintain standards. The result is that legislators and school boards, quick to respond to public complaints with highly visible remedies, begin to mandate tests of all sorts to expand our evidence of the problem and enforce minimum requirements. I would be innately suspicious of any new trend which thirty-five states rush to join within three years." He added a final caution: "There is the clear danger that minimum tests will become maximum tests."

In an effort to create a better public understanding of testing and how tests should be used, Harrington proposed that an independent testing commission on the Federal level be given access to all the relevant data from standardized tests and charged with disseminating detailed information—in layman's language—pertaining to predictive and content validities, reliability, socioeconomic bias, and other factors for the benefit of parents, educators, and policy makers alike.

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V. ACHIEVEMENT TESTING AND BASIC SKILLS: The Federal Response

President Carter's message to the conferees stressed the Administration's concern:

> **There is no greater challenge than the one facing our educational system—to ensure that all children learn, at the very least, to read, to write, and to compute.**

Reaffirming and expanding on this message to present the Federal response to issues regarding achievement tests and basic skills were Joseph A. Califano, Jr., secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Patricia Albjerg Graham, director of the National Institute of Education; Congressman John Brademas, Indiana; and Mary F. Berry, assistant secretary for education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Comments of Joseph A. Califano, Jr.

In conveying the President's message to the conference, HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano, Jr., added his own interest in improving the Nation's educational system. He announced one Federal initiative already begun—the establishment of a new office of testing and assessment within the National Institute of Education.

While the new office will not pretend to have all the answers, he said, "Its principal role will be to help people with questions find places with answers throughout the nation: education organizations with experience in testing, universities and scholars who are experts on tests, and states or school districts which have adopted successful testing programs."

Comments of Patricia Albjerg Graham

The Administration's position on and commitment to education was emphasized by NIE Director Patricia Albjerg Graham. Addressing some of the more specific questions raised at the conference, Graham said, "Testing is not a central issue to the National Institute of Education. Increasing student achievement is the central issue, and testing is simply a means by which we can gauge whether we are achieving that end."

She repeated her opposition to a national test of academic achievement and noted that activities that are reasonable for the Federal Government to undertake include "research, technical assistance, and increasing understanding about testing."

Comments of Congressman John Brademas

Congressman John Brademas, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Select Education, emphasized that: "For the first time in eight years, there is a commitment to support education at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue." The President and Congress are "talking now not as warriors but as negotiators, trying to figure out how much and for what purpose," he said.

Highlights of the pending legislative proposals for Federal activity in education include:

- An additional $400 million for the Title I program and, with a matching fund formula, encouragement to the states to implement their own compensatory education.
- A basic skills and quality education act, aimed at helping states develop basic skills demonstration projects, with competency and achievement testing, and programs to involve parents more directly in the education of their children.
- New initiatives in bilingual education, assistance to school districts that are desegregating, changes in the impacted aid program, and strengthening the use of private schools.
- An increase of $900 million (15 percent) in Federal spending—the largest increase in a decade—for elementary and secondary education.
- The Middle Income Student Assistance Act, which builds on existing programs to provide more higher education grant and loan opportunities for students of middle income families.
- A commitment to seek a cabinet-level department of education.

Comments of Mary F. Berry

Assistant Secretary for Education Mary F. Berry reviewed Federal actions that had already been taken to address problems of testing and basic skills. Namely:

- In the fall of 1977, a task force to focus on the improvement of basic skills was established within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the task force includes representatives from all education divisions.
- During the past year, NIE sponsored a series of four regional conferences to discuss minimum competency testing.

- The National Academy of Education was commissioned by the assistant secretary for education to review policy questions germane to achievement testing and to make recommendations for appropriate Federal action.
- Support has been provided for the National Academy of Sciences to prepare a comprehensive analysis of testing theory and practice throughout the United States.

Summing up the Federal concerns, Berry said: "This is a crucial time for discussing the issues of testing. Professionals are divided over the use of tests; while some support the extensive and increased use of tests, others believe that many tests measure the wrong things and are culturally biased, and that results of tests are frequently misleading and misused. But whatever controversies exist among the professionals, public support for testing programs has probably never been stronger in this country.

"Whether or not test results are truly accurate measures of achievement, they are widely publicized and discussed because they are accepted as being important and uniform measures of how schools and students are performing. The question before this conference is not whether there ought to be tests, but what kind of tests there ought to be and to what uses they should be put. Our goal is to assure that tests are developed in such a way that they tell us something meaningful about individuals, that they promote quality in education, and that they help people to learn. We want to help educators at the state and local levels to use tests constructively and effectively in the education process."

VI. SENSE OF THE CONFERENCE: Conclusions and Recommendations

The lively small group discussions that followed the plenary sessions reflected the participants' keen interest and concern over the issues. In summarizing reports from all of the groups at the end of the conference, Martin Kaplan, executive assistant to the U.S. commissioner of education, offered several overarching consensus statements:

- The sense of this body is that there should not be, under any circumstances, a national achievement test.
- The Federal Government and the Nation should not lose sight of the big picture. Testing is only one part of evaluation, testing and evaluation are only part of schooling, schooling is only part of learning, and learning is only a part of our national effort to improve the quality of life.
- Schooling is everybody's business—parents, students, teachers, administrators, school board members, legislators. It is important to involve everybody at all stages in the process of decision making.

Regarding the general climate of education today, the emergent sense of participants was that:

- The schools are not disasters. This country has reason to be proud of its schools.
- Equal access to education has not been accomplished; it must be aggressively pursued.
- Our school system possesses a number of fine characteristics of our Nation; these characteristics include autonomy, diversity, pluralism, local control, and regionalism.

Specifically regarding testing, the small group rapporteurs reported the following expressions of positions and opinions:

- Testing is part of a larger consumer and accountability movement. One cannot talk about testing without talking also about the need for education to be accountable for achieving its goals.
- Testing and evaluation are useful tools for some purposes. They should not be eliminated merely because they are the messenger of bad tidings.

- The back-to-basics movement often has the tone of discrimination and reduced expectations for minority students. Tests must not be used unfairly for sorting, tracking, enforcing credentialism, labeling, or role typing.
- Education goals should drive the agenda of testing and evaluation, and not the other way around. Tests should not drive the curriculum. They should not force a separation of skills and content. They should not abet anti-intellectualism.
- We must remember what testing is not. More testing does not necessarily mean a better understanding of the whole person, or that more is learned, or that students are more accurately evaluated in terms of their own particular backgrounds, or that the basic skills have been better mastered. Testing does not necessarily mean anything about the ends of education. Testing is a means of assessing the acquisition of a valued end; it is not the end in itself.
- Instead of asking how we can make better tests, we should ask how we can make better use of tests, how tests can be effective means of diagnosis, and how that diagnosis can in turn be translated into educational intervention, remediation, and compensatory efforts.

The following compilation of recommendations for Federal activities includes those most often suggested by the groups. They are in four general categories: policy, implementation, legislative/executive, and research.

Policy

The Federal Government should lead the effort to create an atmosphere of open discussion and mutual understanding for state and local officials, teachers, and parents. These groups should continue developing, implementing, and interpreting testing efforts of their own choosing. Toward that general end, the conference participants recommended the following specific initiatives:

- Encourage awareness of the large view of education in our society—a view in which testing is only a small part.
- Promote appropriate expectations about the uses and limitations of tests and testing.
- Encourage involvement of the broadest possible constituencies in discussions of issues, formulation of standards, and development of solutions to problems.
- Sustain the Federal effort in compensatory education; eliminate the kinds of erratic support that cause programs to move quickly into and out of existence.

- Support and emphasize programs that lead to early detection and correction of learning difficulties.
- Resist all temptations to tell state and local agencies what to do about tests, about standards, about criteria, about techniques, and about the content of learning.
- Award funds and allocate resources based on data other than standardized test results.
- Keep reports of conferences, formulations of policy—in fact, all communications—moving in complementary and consistent directions through the information channels connecting local, state, and national levels of activity.
- Do not smuggle in tests. Do not do it through Title I. Do not do it through the back doors of other Federal agencies and programs.
- Put aside all ideas on behalf of a national curriculum or a national test of achievement.

Implementation

The Federal Government should take immediate action to bring about the following:

- More coherent evaluation mechanisms for federally sponsored programs.
- Models of comprehensive evaluation systems for use at the state level that provide an integrated picture of efforts from testing and diagnosis through remediation.
- The identification of schools that have been successful in contending with low achievement, and wide dissemination and replication of the means such schools employed.
- More research money to local school systems, state education departments, and tribal and territorial governments for the development of appropriate tests.
- A layman's summary of this conference and all other related forums for use especially by those who buy tests and use test results.
- More conferences, training workshops, forums, and publications for parents, teachers, journalists, administrators, local school board members, state legislators, counselors, community members, students, and experts.

Legislative and Executive

The Federal Government should exert a concerted effort to consolidate and strengthen the work already being done in the area of testing by a large number of offices, programs, agencies, and organizations. Suggestions include:

- That Congress re-enact the Education Professions Development Act, which elapsed in the mid-1970s, to provide re-education in testing for administrators, principals, counselors, and school board members.
- That Congress charter the National Academy of Education to serve as adviser to all interested parties in matters of testing.
- That Congress establish a special five-year, blue-ribbon commission to develop Federal standards for performance at specified grade levels and a council on quality education to develop a voluntary high school proficiency examination and Federal certificates of achievement.
- That Congress enact a basic skills and quality education act to assist states with the development of demonstration projects.
- That all existing education programs at the Federal level be consolidated within a single department of education.
- That a special office of testing and measurement be established within the National Institute of Education.

Research

Conferees urged the Federal Government to expand the scope of its research effort to seek more accurate answers to questions such as:

- How do people learn?
- What changes take place in learning over the course of a lifetime?
- What factors are involved in causing some people to succeed and others to fail at learning?
- What skills are basic in American society?
- How do all the different parts fit together and relate to one another in a learning environment?
- What do specific kinds of tests actually test?
- What are the appropriate uses for each of the different kinds of tests?
- How can test data be made more comparable within and across schools, districts, and states?

- What can be done to provide better evaluation of tests presently in use?
- How can the reporting of test results be improved?
- What information should be included in users manuals in order to make optimal use of associated tests?
- What can be done to make tests fair for particular minority populations within American society?
- How can tests be used to provide better diagnostic assistance for individuals and groups of individuals?
- To what extent do tests determine the selection of curriculum, and to what extent does curriculum determine the selection of tests?
- What educational practices follow as a result of the installation of minimal competency requirements and the reporting of minimal competency testing results?
- What do we know about the validity and effects of teacher-constructed tests?
- What is the effect of adult educational politics on pupil educational performance?
- What are the alternatives to testing for evaluation, diagnosis, and prediction?

APPENDIX: THE CONFERENCE AGENDA

Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, D.C.

March 1–3, 1978

March 1, 1978

8:30–9:00 p.m.

Mary F. Berry
Assistant Secretary for Education

Overview of the Federal Program

9:00 p.m.

Harold Howe II
Vice President for Education and Research
The Ford Foundation

Tests and Schooling

March 2, 1978

8:30–10:00 a.m.

Panel I: ACHIEVEMENT TESTING: WHY AND WHEREFORE

Moderator:

Lauren B. Resnick, Codirector
Learning Research and Development Center
University of Pittsburgh

Panelists:

Vito Perrone, President
National Consortium on Testing

Considerations in use of test results

William W. Turnbull, President
Educational Testing Service

Standardized tests: Current uses and limitations

Bernard C. Watson, Vice President for Academic Administration
Temple University

Views on the use and misuse of tests: Implications for children from poor and minority families

Maria Ramirez, Assistant Commissioner for General Education and Curricular Services
New York Department of Education

Cultural considerations in achievement testing and the basic skills

Diane S. Ravitch, Assistant Professor of History and Education
Teachers College
Columbia University

Tests in a social functions perspective: What we have and what we need

10:00–10:30 a.m. Commentary from the floor

10:30–10:40 a.m. Charge to Small Groups

11:00–Noon Small Group Discussions

Topic: Achievement Tests and Basic Skills: Preliminary Considerations of the Federal Role

12:15–1:00 p.m. Remarks by *Secretary Joseph A. Califano, Jr.*

1:00–2:00 p.m. Teachers and Achievement Testing

John Ryor, President
National Education Association

Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

2:00–2:45 p.m. Commentary from the floor

3:15–4:15 p.m. Panel II: ACHIEVEMENT TESTS AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: STATE AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

Moderator: *Lt. Gov. Richard Celeste*, Ohio

Panelists: *John W. Porter*, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Michigan

Test scores and educational policy

Frederick H. Schultz, Chairman
Florida Education Council

State legislatures and testing programs

Ann Kahn, Fairfax County School Board and National Secretary, National Congress of Parents and Teachers

A parent's view of achievement testing

Ramon C. Cortines, Superintendent of Schools
Pasadena Unified School District

Perspective from the district superintendent level

4:15–4:45 p.m. Commentary from the floor

7:00–8:00 p.m. Remarks from *The Honorable Claiborne Pell*,
Rhode Island
United States Senate

8:00–9:00 p.m. — **Panel III: ACHIEVEMENT TESTS AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Moderator: *Willard Wirtz*, Chairman of the Board
National Manpower Institute

Panelists: *The Honorable S. I. Hayakawa*,
California
United States Senate

The Honorable Michael Harrington,
Massachusetts
U.S. House of Representatives

March 3, 1978

8:00–9:00 a.m. — Remarks by *The Honorable John Brademas*, Indiana
U.S. House of Representatives

9:00–9:10 a.m. — Charge to Small Groups

9:15–11:00 a.m. — Small Group Discussions

Topic: Achievement Tests and Basic Skills: Guidelines for Federal Assistance

1:15–1:45 p.m. — Sense of the Conference: Overview of the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Discussion Groups

1:45–2:30 p.m. — Commentary from the floor and Federal response

Chairperson: *Mary F. Berry*, Assistant Secretary for Education

Ernest L. Boyer, U.S. Commissioner of Education

Patricia Albjerg Graham, Director
National Institute of Education

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